

February, 17, 2016

TO: Commission on the Improvement of the Status of Children in Indiana
FROM: Dr. Susan Lockwood, for the Education Outcomes Task Force
RE: Progress on Objectives

Please see below for a report of Task Force activities since May, 2015:

Increase School Stability and Decrease Absenteeism (Truancy)

The Education Outcomes Task Force has identified three promising initiatives which could impact this objective. Hamilton County Judge Steve Nation has had successful outcomes with the Youth Assistance Program. The Department of Mental Health and Addictions has a SAMSHA grant to expand Systems of Care to each county in the State of Indiana. The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative is concerned with reducing secure juvenile detention and out of home placements.

The Education Outcomes Task force will establish a sub-committee consisting of representatives from the Youth Assistance Program, Systems of Care, and JDAI to coordinate efforts around increasing school stability and decreasing absenteeism.

Improve transitions for youth from DOC and DCS to other agencies and to the community, including reenrollment into school.

The Indiana Department of Correction/Division of Youth Services is involved with three different federal reentry grant projects through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The Education Outcomes Task Force is actively participating in these grant projects, providing input and fulfilling the role of “Statewide Reentry Task Force” for the projects.

1. Through OJJDP’s Juvenile Mental Health Collaboration Project, IDOC/DYS and Corizon are partnering to provide training in Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT). OJJDP funding will cover the cost to train and certify 35 DYS staff.

MRT is the premiere cognitive-behavioral program for substance abuse treatment for juvenile justice-involved youth. MRT is a program that combines education, group and individual counseling, and structured exercises to develop positive moral development in youth. MRT is a SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration) evidence-based registered program.

2. The OJJDP Juvenile System Reentry Reform Planning Grant was completed December 31, 2015. After 12 months of cross-agency collaboration, a comprehensive action plan was developed, and was narrowed to four objectives focused on increased family engagement:
 - a. Assess the needs of the youth’s parent/guardian and offer support through appropriate agency resources
 - b. Improve Facility Climate through Staff Retention to promote Family Engagement
 - c. Establish formal policy and practice that promotes “warm-handoffs” of students and families to services
 - d. Utilize technology to improve child/family engagement

Work on these four objectives continues.

3. The OJJDP Smart on Juvenile Justice Community Supervision Planning Project began October 1, 2015 and will continue through September 30, 2016.
 - a. A project team from Indiana participated in the National Second Chance Act Conference in Washington, D.C. in December, 2015.
 - b. A project team from Indiana attended the American Probation and Parole Association National Winter Training Institute on in February, 2016 to receive additional guidance regarding grant-related objectives.
4. Support those county detention centers that are struggling to provide education services to students in their care.
 - a. With support from Dr. J.T. Coopman, Executive Director of the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents, Dr. Susan Lockwood distributed the Juvenile Detention Standards, endorsed by the Commission in May, 2015, at each of the Fall District Public School Superintendent meetings.
 - b. There seems to be confusion regarding whether or not students at county detention centers can be counted in the local school corporation's ADM. Many school superintendents questioned how to pay to provide education services to youth in detention.
 - c. The Indiana Department of Correction/Division of Youth Services is partnering with the Youth L.A.W. Team to pilot the use of Gradpoint, an on-line curriculum, in several county detention centers, using licensed teachers to provide over-sight to the participating students.

Increase alternatives for schools regarding youth who would otherwise be suspended or expelled.

A sub-committee was established to work on this objective. The sub-committee is chaired by Ms. Julie Smart, from the Indiana Department of Education.

- a. Ms. JauNae Hanger, of the Children's Policy and Law Initiative of Indiana, hosted a "Summit on School Discipline" in October, 2015. The participants included representatives from a variety of stakeholders, including public school administrators, mental health professionals, juvenile justice, universities, researchers, Indiana Department of Education, and others. A report from the Summit will be available later this year, and Ms. Hanger will ask for a place on the Commission's agenda in order to present the findings.
- b. The sub-committee will evaluate existing data to determine which school corporations need guidance to lower their suspensions and expulsions. Technical assistance will be provided to these corporations based on need, with the help of resources from the Supportive School Discipline Initiative, sponsored through the Council of State Governments.
- c. The sub-committee has identified a need for alternatives for youth who are expelled from school. Currently, they are not able to enroll in virtual schools if they have been expelled. Additionally, public school administrators have expressed reluctance

to enroll “marginal” students due to their negative impact on school performance benchmarks. We are exploring options for those schools that re-enroll “marginal” students and support them to achieve positive outcomes.

- d. Members of the Sub-Committee are scheduled to testify to Office of Civil Rights at a public hearing (February, 17, 2016) regarding the “School to Prison Pipeline”.
- e. The Indiana Department of Education has hired a Director of School Social Work and Behavioral Health.

Cross-Task Force Work on Substance Abuse Education and Treatment

Governor Pence and the Executive Committee of the Commission tasked the Education Outcomes Task Force and the Substance Abuse and Child Safety Task Force to work together to develop age appropriate substance abuse curriculum for students and offer ways to better connect affected youth and families with substance abuse services.

Senator Randall Head (Chair of the Substance Abuse and Child Safety Task Force) and Dr. Susan Lockwood initial discussions with staff from IDOE and convened a joint sub-committee to work on this project.

The joint sub-committee, chaired by Ms. Parri Black, the President and CEO of Youth First, Inc., has done some pre-work and will is schedule to meet in March, 2016.